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Halftime Report: Legislative Session

We are now at the halfway point of the 120-day 2008 legislative session, and I want to update you on our accomplishments so far and preview what's ahead.

We're celebrating two major economic-development victories: [ConocoPhillips](#) has decided to build a Global Technology Center in Louisville for the research and development of alternative fuels, and Denmark-based [Vestas Blades](#) has opened its first North American manufacturing plant in Windsor.

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Coming Up ★★★★★

9:00 a.m. Tuesday, March 11:

Gov. Ritter will speak with and take questions from the National Federation of Independent Businesses. Old Supreme Court Chambers, State Capitol.

Friday and Saturday, March 14-15:

Constituent outreach trip to Southeast Colorado.

2:30 p.m. Monday, March 17:

Gov. Ritter will be signing a proclamation in honor of military veteran widows and widowers during a ceremony in the Governor's Office.

11:30 a.m. Friday, March 21:

Gov. Ritter will address the Greeley Chamber of Commerce, Greeley Country Club, 4500 W. 10th St.

Latest Photos ★★★★★



Gov. Ritter will be sending a regular eNewsletter to stay in touch with the people of Colorado. If this was forwarded to you from a friend, please click [Subscribe](#) below to sign up for future eNewsletters from our office. If you would like to stop receiving these please click the [unsubscribe](#) button below.

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MONDAY, MAR. 10, 2008

We are now at the halfway point of the 120-day 2008 legislative session, and I want to update you on our accomplishments so far and preview what's ahead.

We're celebrating two major economic-development victories: [ConocoPhillips](#) has decided to build a Global Technology Center in Louisville for the research and development of alternative fuels, and Denmark-based [Vestas Blades](#) has opened its first North American manufacturing plant in Windsor. The facility will produce 1,800 giant wind-turbine blades each year and provide 650 new jobs to Coloradans.

Projects like these show just how quickly Colorado is becoming an international leader in renewable energy. Colorado's **New Energy Economy** is creating opportunities and benefiting our environment all across Colorado. This is just the beginning of what promises to be an exciting year for the New Energy Economy.

Business Development -- We also are partnering with bipartisan lawmakers on the most robust economic-development package in more than a decade. This legislation will ease the tax burden for tens of thousands of businesses, help small rural companies qualify for job-creation incentives, and invest millions of dollars into bioscience and clean energy projects.

On the **Education** front:

Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids -- We have bipartisan sponsorship for our [Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids](#). This proposal is attracting national attention. It would overhaul what's taught in our K-12 classrooms and make it relevant to what's needed for admission into college.

Smart Start -- Additional legislation would expand preschool and full-day kindergarten opportunities and deploy dozens of guidance counselors into targeted middle and high schools to keep kids in school and prepare them for college or meaningful job training.

B.E.S.T. -- I'm also supporting State Treasurer Cary Kennedy, House Speaker Andrew Romanoff and Senate President Peter Groff's plan to fix dilapidated school building around the state. Their 'Building Excellent Schools Today' proposal will make a huge difference to students all over Colorado.

Higher Education -- I'm very pleased that this year we finally will return state investments in public colleges and universities to pre-recession 2001 levels. We still lag far behind our national peers (we are ranked 49th in the country in per-student funding for higher ed). But we're making key investments and holding tuition increases in check.

Buildings Blocks to Health Care Reform -- This legislative session we also introduced a common-sense ["Building Blocks to Health Care Reform"](#) plan. We're tackling some of the fundamental ills of our broken health-care system: cost, quality and the availability of care. And we're doing it by living within the state's existing resources.

Finally, I am continuing my travels outside the Capitol, meeting with people in rural, suburban and urban communities in every corner of Colorado. Upcoming trips will bring me to Otero, Bent, Prowers, Weld, Mesa, Chaffee, Fremont, Park and Summit counties.

Last month, I visited the far Eastern Plains town of Wray, just 10 miles from the Nebraska border. I helped cut the ribbon on a [new wind turbine](#) that will provide clean, affordable energy to the school district and the town -- another victory for Colorado's New Energy Economy!

Sincerely,

Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor